

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS – PLYMOUTH DISTRICT  
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**DA CRUZ APPLAUDS PAROLE BOARD DECISION TO KEEP  
JEFFREY ROBERIO IN PRISON**

**BROCKTON** – The Parole Board today issued their opinion to unanimously deny parole to Jeffrey Roberio for the brutal 1986 murder of Lewis Jennings, Plymouth County District Attorney Timothy J. Cruz has announced.

Roberio and co-defendant, Michael Eagles, were convicted separately for the July 29, 1986 murder of 79-year-old Lewis Jennings inside his trailer home in Middleborough. Roberio, 17-years and 9 months old at the time of the offense, was convicted of first-degree murder under theories of deliberate premeditation, felony murder, and extreme atrocity and cruelty. At trial, the evidence showed that the victim had been beaten with a blunt object and strangled with his own pillow case. Jennings suffered a broken spine, ribs, neck and had injuries to his face and defensive wounds on his hands.

In December 2014, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court ruled that juveniles could not serve life sentences without parole because their brains were not fully developed when they committed the crime. The decision was retroactive, meaning all people in the state convicted of first-degree murder when they were minors including Roberio, could be re-sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole.

A parole board hearing was held for Roberio on June 25, 2015 where Roberio testified on his own behalf, and Jennings family members and DA Cruz spoke against his release.

“I commend the Parole Board today on their thoughtful decision to keep Jeffrey Roberio in prison,” DA Cruz said. “During testimony at his hearing, Mr. Roberio spoke about being lead singer of a rock band he had formed behind bars and showed no remorse to the Jennings family as they sat there and listened. The heinous nature of this brutal murder was enough to deny his request for parole but the defendant has not taken any steps through anger management or other programming, to prepare for release into society.”

In their unanimous decision denying parole, the Board stated that Roberio had not participated in enough programs in prison to better himself and had not met the proper standards necessary for release. “At age 17, Jeffrey Roberio (admittedly) was the mastermind and primary

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actor in a robbery where he viciously, and brutally, beat and strangled an elderly man to death. Roberio claims that alcohol abuse was responsible for his violent behavior. Nevertheless, he spent the last 26 years at Old Colony working and getting “comfortable,” rather than aggressively pursuing rehabilitative programming to address his issues of substance abuse, anger, and violence.”

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